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Top Gear
Getting the latest gear onboard

The boardsports industry is awash with innovative, exciting, stylish, practical new products. Here, we highlight a few of our current favourites.

Turbol flame
There was a time, when it was still regarded as cool to smoke, that a turbo lighter was a symbol of some status. Now, smoking may have become unacceptably to the majority of the population and lighters generally have lost their cachet, but this little beauty, the D07 from Turbol flame is both cool and multi-functional. It works as a mini blowtorch so can be used for a spot of on-the-roof soldering. It melts wax quickly without leaving any carbon deposits because of its blue flame and is suitable for extended use.
T: 01509 888 195
E: dave@turbolflame.co.uk
W: www.turbolflame.co.uk

Beyond Snow
The Strap-it binding, that's Strap- 'it' for the less than keen minded amongst you from Beyond Snow, according to its makers, "allows rapid entry" (simple!) and "relief of pressure in crucial places" (though most seriously thought, eight years in its making by Snowcooters, this award-winning binding is a seriously easy piece of kit and still in its first season here, it is being trialed in a limited number of specialist stores in this country. Quite nice, if you're into the basic model, but the guys that have given it a go, feel us its got real potential.
T: 07904 265796
E: matt@shredshop.co.uk
W: beyondsnow.com

Quartz
Do you think when he started out appearing on walls in the 1980s, graffiti artist Abel ever thought in his dreams, he'd have a shoe named after him. Well, that's exactly what has happened, as Quills has launched a new signature shoe called, the Quills Sense Abel. Of course, art and board design in particular go back a long way, but you have to get the right art for the right product, hence so far no sign of Abel doing any work with Gnartronough, for example. Anyway, we think the Quills Sense Abel is a minor work of art in its own right and at £99.99 comes a hell of a lot cheaper than Van Quigly's Surfboarder.
T: 0117 855 5988
E: info@quills.com
W: quills.com

Vans
Now, it was about the time that Bruce Dickinson and his chums from Iron Maiden were teaming out 'Run To The Hills', that some of us were more than a little pre-occupied with angry indie guitar music. We considered it vastly superior to metal and didn't mind saying so publicly. So you can imagine our distress, not because Vans have released this limited edition Elsbene Iron Maiden jacket (£129, for pity, it looks The Business), but because there are no plans, we hear, for an even more limited edition Bridwell Tusk hood.
T: 0208 646 4047
W: vans.co.uk

Headwaters
In the days before the world went Home-mad and the real star of The Simpsons was Bart, rather than the world and his wife shouting "Don't worry too much, the show's main catchphrases came from Bart himself: "Don't have a cow man" and "Eat my shorts". These five boardshorts from Headwaters look so good they could be just about to edible. Described as, "the perfect boardshort" by their makers, these ergonomically designed shorts with responsive panels, let with the rider to give superb fit and performance and, even more interestingly for Bart fans, they come in black, white, they come in black, white, they come in black, white and wait for it... chocolate.
T: 01159 653009
E: info@headwaters.com
W: headwaters.com

Boardweb
Son of De-wet, this little critter's going to grow up into something a bit special. It's not rocket science, in fact it's beautifully simple. A simple strap system designed to get board and boarder to the powder with the minimum of hassle. It's durable, easy to fit, saving no buckles, and stable in the muck.
T: 0208 2088 0830
E: enquiries@skilweb.co.uk
W: skilweb.co.uk

Extremepie
The word 'Rebel' conjures up images of freedom fighters, angry teenagers railing against authority and convention, or possibly even soldier-headed rock star Billy Idol whose anthem 'Rebel Yell' was a big hit in the 1980s. Whatever, you're not thinking practical and sensible, which is what The Rebel from Extremepie is. It's a very attractive little gizm with more features on it than you can shake a stick at: watch, LCD micro-light, compass and hold-out sections, amongst them. Weighing just 50g, waterproof to 30 metres and costing £70, it might not be adorning the belt of one Major William 100 anytime soon, but it looks like a cracking good buy to us.
T: 06787 555 353
E: info@extremepie.com
W: Extremepie.com